

LEIGHTON WELLS

Dear Strava Hiring Team,

I bring more than twenty years of commercial and technology experience, alongside doctoral research in endurance sport and two decades of coaching. At Strava, I would use that experience to strengthen the evidence behind product decisions and identify where sport science can support the company's growth.

My involvement in sports technology began with Catapult Sports during its early growth. I worked directly with co-founder and original CEO Shaun Holthouse across brand, digital and commercial projects, including due diligence associated with an acquisition. I saw the business before Catapult became the global sports-technology company it is today, and gained first-hand experience of what it takes to turn strong science and technology into products, platforms and a brand that high-performance organisations trust.

That experience forms part of a broader commercial background spanning technology, startups, executive marketing, capital raising, partnerships and market development. More recently, I have presented on behalf of AusTriathlon and TrainingPeaks, consulted to sports-technology companies and held strategic discussions with organisations across the training-management ecosystem. I understand both the opportunities in this market and the commercial realities behind them.

I subsequently added deep scientific expertise to that commercial experience. I completed my PhD in sport science at Deakin University, researching training-load management and coaching practice in triathlon. I currently teach at Deakin and Victoria University, ranked first and sixth globally respectively in the 2025 ShanghaiRanking of sport science institutions. My doctoral research was examined by internationally recognised endurance scientist Professor Stephen Seiler, who assessed it as meeting or exceeding international standards. I have also coached endurance athletes since 2006, connecting scientific research with the practical realities of training and performance.

That combination is what I would bring to Strava.

The immediate scientific priorities of the role require rigorous but commercially useful judgement: establishing defensible standards for evidence and product claims, working constructively with Runna coaches and product teams, and being clear about uncertainty and athlete safety without allowing scientific process to become a barrier to innovation.

I also see significant opportunity in how Strava combines objective training data with subjective information such as perceived exertion, recovery and athlete context. My research has focused heavily on the relationship between data, coaching judgement and decision-making. Better integration of those inputs can create a richer understanding of the athlete than either provides alone.

AI can make that understanding considerably more useful. I am already working with AI-assisted evidence, verification and decision-support systems. For Strava, the opportunity is not simply to generate more analysis. It is to reduce friction: identify what matters within increasingly complex athlete data, surface questions a coach or athlete may not know to ask, and help people make better decisions faster.

Beyond the immediate remit, I would bring a strategic view of where sport science could help take Strava next. I understand high-performance sport, the coach and training-management ecosystem, and the broader endurance market. Combined with Strava's extraordinary community and data assets, I believe there are opportunities to deepen existing products while thoughtfully extending into new markets.

Few roles genuinely require someone who can move between scientists, coaches and athletes, AI and product teams, and senior commercial decision-makers. I have spent my career working across those worlds and would welcome the opportunity to bring them together at Strava.

Kind regards,

Leighton Wells, PhD